

Augustinus Moravus Olomucensis



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of the Death of Augustinus Moravus Olomucensis (1467–1513)

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Edited by
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FARKAS GÁBOR KISS

Augustinus Moravus and the Transmission of Ancient Wisdom in the Context of Poetry:

In defensionem poetices

When Augustinus Moravus published his dialogue about the *Defense of poetry* in Venice in the spring of 1493, the subject was hardly a novelty. A number of humanists—including such luminaries as Petrarch or Boccaccio—had tried their pens at the subject and produced treatises which repositioned poetry and rhetoric in the social and scholarly value system of the 14th and 15th centuries. Most of these efforts had an antagonistic attitude to medicine and law, two major disciplines taught at universities in the later Middle Ages: Boccaccio placed poetry in the context of a virtual defense against the attack of law and jurisprudence,¹ while Petrarch positioned his praise of rhetoric within epistemological invectives against medicine and the scholastic use of language (1352–1353).² Whereas Boccaccio and Petrarch were writing outside the university environment, the debate itself clearly affected the question of ranking between the arts courses, medicine, and law, and it was within the university context that Augustinus Moravus envisaged his own defense of poetry. His dialogue, written and situated in Padua, the most important university town in Northern Italy, depicts a vivid discussion between Augustinus, the author's alter ego, Laelius, a defender of medicine, and Bassareus, a comic doctor, on the merits of poetry as compared to other arts and sciences, especially to medicine; Laelius even tries to persuade Augustinus to study medicine instead of poetry.

1 See Vittorio Zaccaria, "La difesa della poesia nelle 'Genealogie' del Boccaccio," *Lettere italiane* 38 (1986), pp. 281–311. For the text, see Giovanni Boccaccio, *Genealogie deorum gentilium – De montibus, silvis, fontibus, lacubus, fluminibus, stagnis seu paludibus, de diversis nominibus maris*, ed. Vittorio Zaccaria, 2 vols., (Milan: Mondadori, 1998–1999). For an English translation, see Boccaccio, *Genealogy of the Pagan Gods*, ed. and trans. Jon Solomon (Cambridge MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2011). This study was supported by the projects OTKA PD-104316 and the MTA Lendület program.

2 For the text, see Petrarch, *Invective contra medicum*, ed. Francesco Bausi (Florence: Le Lettere, 2005). For a convenient summary of the debate, see Stefano Cracolici, "The Art of Invective," in *Petrarch: A Critical Guide to the Complete Works*, eds. Victoria Kirkham, Armando Maggi (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), 255–262, 440–449 and Nancy Struever, "Petrarch's 'Invective contra medicum': An Early Confrontation of Rhetoric and Medicine," *Modern Language Notes* 108 (1993): 659–679.

Although many of the dialogue's arguments are unoriginal and can be retraced to ancient sources and earlier defenses of poetry,³ Augustinus significantly re-elaborated the subject in several aspects. First, the target audience of his dialogue was completely novel, as he addressed his dialogue to a Central European readership, and his text had a considerable reception in the circle of German humanists. Second, as I will try to show in this paper, unlike Petrarch, whose assault at medical studies relied on philosophical and linguistic reasoning, Augustinus based his attack against medicine on the importance of astrological influences and cosmic sympathies, a field, which he considered to be unknown to most "empirical" doctors of his day. Third, his ideas on the defense of poetry were framed within the context of the *translatio studii*, the transmission of learning, as he thought that his age was an elected one, when scholarship might flourish again thanks to the printing press.

Augustinus propagated these ideas in Central Europe by dedicating the text in Padua to two distant patrons, who were important for the advancement of his earlier career: to Johannes Roth, bishop of Wrocław and to his uncle Andreas Ctibor, canon of Olomouc.⁴ Johannes Roth, who might have supported him even before his study tour to Italy, belonged to the oldest generation of German humanists. Augustinus's work might have appealed to him particularly, as he was the author of a text with similar content in his younger days, a letter exchange with Gregor Heimburg (1454), in which he emphasized the merits of rhetoric as an art in his own right, and brought several arguments against the study of law.⁵ Roth claimed that law has only regional validity, and it needs no creativity ("perspicuitas", "ingenii

3 For a discussion of the sources, see Karel Svoboda, "Augustina Olomouckého 'Dialog na obranu básnictví'," *Listy filologické / Folia philologica* 69 (1942), 20–33 and Karel Svoboda, "Il dialogo 'In difesa della poesia' di Agostino da Olomouc," *Lettere italiane* 8 (1956), 34–49.

4 See Augustinus Moravus, *Dialogus in defensionem poetices*, (Venice: [Paulus Fridenperger], 24 March 1493), 2r–3r (to Johannes Roth, Padua, Nov. 13, 1492), 17v–18v (to Andreas Ctibor, Padua, Nov. 19, 1492). (GW 3057) For the support of Ctibor and Roth to Augustinus, see Ralf Georg Czapla, "Augustinus Moravus," in: *Verfasserlexikon: Deutscher Humanismus, 1480–1520*, ed. Franz Josef Worstbrock (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2006), vol. 1., cc. 61–62. A critical edition was published by Karel Svoboda: *Augustini Olomucensis Dialogus in defensionem poetices*, ed. Karel Svoboda (Prague: Česka akademie věd a umění, 1948). As it has a number of mistakes in transcription (see Bohumil Ryba, "Augustini Olomucensis...", *Listy filologické* 73 (1949), 44–49), I will refer to the incunable print.

5 For a partial edition, see Paul Joachimsohn, *Gregor Heimburg* (Bamberg: Büchner, 1891), 310–316. On Roth, see Franz Josef Worstbrock, "Roth, Johannes," in *Verfasserlexikon* 8 (1993), 269–275; Rainald Becker, "Der Breslauer Bischof Johannes Roth (1426–1506) als 'instaurator veterum' und 'benefactor ecclesiae suae'. Eine Variation zum Thema des Humanistenbischofs," *Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Altertumskunde und Kirchengeschichte* 96 (2001), 100–123; with important additions by Agostino Sottili, "The Humanist Education of Johannes Roth, the Prince-Bishop of Breslau," in id., *Humanismus und Universitätsbesuch: Die Wirkung italienischer Universitäten auf die Studia Humanitatis nördlich der Alpen*, (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 396–412, esp. 407–408.

acumen”), as it consists in just memorizing rules. Furthermore, its main subject of study, the *Digest*, is as confused as a labyrinth, whereas those fields of scholarship are more praiseworthy which are clearer and cover larger territories of knowledge.⁶ Indeed, their common interest in the revival of oratory and poetry might have prompted Augustinus to dedicate his work to Bishop Roth.

Augustinus tried to reach beyond the direct circle of his dedicatees. He envisaged a broad and highly educated readership for his work at home, which would include not only his uncle and the cultivated bishop of Wrocław, but also Bohuslaus Hassenstein-Lobkowitz, Ulrich von Rosenberg (Ulrichus de Rosis, Oldřich III. z Rožmberka), and Ladislaus (Ladislav) of Boskovice, the intellectual and social elite of Bohemia and Moravia in the late 15th century.⁷ Not only Bohuslaus Hassenstein-Lobkowitz, the most renowned humanist poet of Bohemia, but also Ulrich von Rosenberg and Ladislaus of Boskovice were obvious choices for readership at home. Rosenberg studied in Bologna with Filippo Beroaldo the Elder in 1487–1489, where the Italian master dedicated his *Annotationes centum* (1488, GW 4113) to him, and they remained in epistolary contact at least until 1494.⁸ Similarly, Ladislaus of Boskovice belonged to the social and cultural elite: he was attached to the court of King Matthias and a surviving manuscript shows his interest in classical literature.⁹ He commissioned probably the earliest Renaissance

6 “Illa autem doctrina est praestabilior, quae res praeclariores et plures comprehendit, quam ea, quae solum litigandi formas complectitur et facilis est.” (Joachimsohn, o.c., 312.)

7 “Satis nobis fuerit, si eas [lucubrationes] Reverendissimus Vratislaviensis Antistes, cuius eas nomine emisimus, non reprobet. Si Udalricus de Rosis, si Bohuslaus de Hassenstein, si Ladislaus de Bozkovis inter procures Regni Boemiae tum Latinarum, tum Graecarum litterarum peritissimi, si Joannes denique meus Oppaviensis, inter primores civitatis Olomucensis senator optimus...”. Ibid. 18r–v. Ulrich von Rosenberg (Oldřich z Rožmberka, 1471–1513), had a significant library.

8 See Bohumil Ryba, “Filip Beroaldus a čeští humanisté [Filippo Beroaldo and the Czech humanists],” in *Zpráva o činnosti městského musea v Č. Budějovicích za léta 1932 a 1933*, (České Budejovice: Karel Fiala, 1934), 6–7, 10–11, 19–10, esp. note 63. Beroaldo tried to seduce Ulrich back to Italy by listing the major attractions of Bologna, scholarship, hunting and brothels (“Urbs nostra si unquam scortis abundavit, nunc maxime habundat, si unquam floruit, nunc maxime floret. Omnia sunt plena voluptatum multiplicium. Nullus est in homine sensus, qui [lege: cui] non sit apud nos titillacio et blandimentum. [...] Potes venari, scortari, potes etiam studere.” Ibid., 20).

9 Alois Vojtěch Šembera, *Páni z Boskovic a potomní držitelé hradu boskovického* [The Lords of Boskovice, and the later lords of the castle of Boskovice], (Vienna: private edition, 1870) 40–42; Antonín Kalous, “Boskovice urai Mátyás király diplomáciai és politikai szolgálatában,” *Századok* 141 (2007), 375–389. (esp. 387–388). His ms. is Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, cod. 3165, a copy of Ovid’s *Heroides*, a typical reading at the arts courses at universities. Cf. Stefan Endlicher, *Catalogus codicum philologicorum Latinorum: Bibliothecae palatinae Vindobonensis* (Vienna: Beck, 1836), 76. Ladislaus of Boskovice was registered at the University of Vienna in 1471. Kalous, o.c., 387.

carved stone portraits in Bohemia, representing himself and his wife in the castle of Moravska Třebova, exactly in the years 1492-95.¹⁰

Augustinus Moravus was conscious of the greatness of the age in which he was living, and the ideas exposed in his contemporary dedicatory letters give us a better understanding of why he attributed such importance to the defense of poetry. As he says in a 1492 letter written to Johannes Lucilius Santritter, the Venetian printer originating from Germany,¹¹ he was tremendously excited about the flourishing of humanities:

When I wonder about the general conditions of our age, and especially when I think about it more thoroughly from the point of view of the ancients [ex priscorum illorum imagine] and meditate upon it, I often happen to boast [gloriar] more than it is fair that by chance I was born into an age, when – after the almost complete extinction of the fruits of the best disciplines, their study has revived so much that those fields which have decayed by the negligence of the earlier times are now reanimated, and with a kind of resurrected spirit [redivivo quodam spiritu] are alive again and bearing new fruits.¹²

‘Gloriari’, the word, which Augustinus Moravus picks to describe his feelings here, is well-chosen: his age does not only surpass the recent dark centuries, but through such inventions as printing, this new era also exceeds the wisdom of Antiquity. The “new fruits”, which are brought forward by his age, are to be understood not only as imitations of the ancient models, the “fruits of the disciplines”, but also as daring, emulative efforts, which may fill contemporary minds with a sense of pride.

To Augustinus, this revival and flourishing of sciences and human studies was closely connected to the transmission of knowledge. As he says in the

10 Jan Chlábek, “Medallions with the portraits of Ladislav z Boskovic and his wife Magdaléna z Dubé a Lipého,” in *Matthias Corvinus, the King. Tradition and renewal in the Hungarian royal court 1458–1490*, ed. Péter Farbaky, András Vég (Budapest: Budapest History Museum, 2008), 277–278.

11 Santritter arrived to Venice from Heilbronn, and he was hosted in the home of Franciscus Niger, where he set up his first printing press, as he confesses in his first publication, the *Grammatica* of Niger (Venice, 1480). Cf. also the lines “Santritter Helbronna genitus de gente Ioannes, // Lucilius prompsit grammata docta Nigri” (ibid., f. dd6r). On the possible influence of Niger on Augustinus Moravus, see later.

12 *Exhortatoria in impressione tabularum Astronomicarum Alfonsi Regis. Augustinus Moravus Olomucensis Johanni Lucilio Santritter Heilbronnensi*: “Quum temporum nostrorum conditionem mecum ipse reputo Johannes Lucili, amice suavissime, eamque ex priscorum illorum imagine diligentius expendo, atque pertracto, gloriar sepe non mediocriter soleo, id me potissimum aetatis incidisse, in quo post defectos paene optimarum disciplinarum fructus, is demum studiorum ardor succreverit, ut quae longa vetustatis negligentia deperierant, iam redeant iterum, ac redivivo quodam spiritu in meliorem propemodum frugem excitentur atque repullulent.” *Tabule astronomice Alphonsi Regis*, ed. Augustinus Moravus (Venice, Johannes Hamann, 1492), A2r.

dedication written to the *Emendationes in Catullum* of Hieronymus Avantius in 1495, science was thriving in the antiquity (*antiquitas*), when libraries were founded and texts were within easy reach to readers. Libraries—treated as a kind of spiritual arsenal—were the preconditions of the flourishing of sciences: “so many highly cultured men, so many famous minds were flourishing at the same time, as soon as these libraries—like some arsenals—were publicly available.”¹³ Thus, the availability of books and the ease of access were prerequisites for the continuous transmission of knowledge and the circulation of ideas. Augustinus claimed that in this sense the literary productions of his own age grew up to the ancient models. The efforts that characterized ancient times in preserving knowledge were taken up again, and books—rich in ideas—could be easily found again: “I cannot but greet in our age that in the moment when the shining light of literature was almost extinct, it returned to those old times, so that—divesting itself of barbarity—it might aspire again to that ancient honor, and it invests so much effort into collecting the books of the best authors that soon what we call a lifetime might be too short to read them all.”¹⁴ The glory of his own days is due to the widespread reading of Pliny, Statius, Pomponius Mela, Properce, and Juvenal—and with the aid of the recommended emendations of Hieronymus Avantius, now also the works of Catull would be read with more use and pleasure. The process that Augustinus describes here, is closely connected to the idea of the *translatio studii*, the transmission of knowledge from age to age, from language to language and from empire to empire. For him, passing on the knowledge contained in ancient sources is the key to the revival of sciences, and the more texts can be accessed, the more an age will be civilized.

At the same time, the inaccessibility of texts curtails the possibility of a revival, and the interruption in the transmission of knowledge creates an irrecoverable loss. Augustinus implied this view when he bemoaned the loss of ancient writings in the dedication of the *Canones* of Giovanni Bianchini. As he claimed, “if nobody else, then even Joannes Blanchinus alone gives enough proof of how much benefit there is in the invention of printing with

13 Hieronymus Avantius, *Emendationes in Catullum* (Venice: Joannes Tacuinus de Tridino, 1495), a1v: “tot viros eruditissimos, tot praeclarissima ingenia uno semel tempore effloruisse, ubi ea excolendi ingenii quasi armamentaria quaedam publicitus exponerentur”. Dated to March 5, 1494. Edited in Julia Haig Gaisser, “Catullus,” in *Catalogus Translationum et Commentariorum*, vol. 7., ed. Virginia Brown (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1992), 234. About this letter, see also Ludovica De Nava, “L’epistola di Girolamo Avanzi ad Agostino Moravo di Olomuc,” *Lettere italiane* 45 (1993), 402–426.

14 “in quo aevo nostro non gratulari et quidem vehementissime non possum, quod extincto iam prope bonarum litterarum splendore in ea rursum tempora redierit, ut exuta barbarie in pristinum illud decus denuo aspiet taleque congerendis optimorum auctorum libris studium adhibeat, ut id brevi cum his quae diximus tempora vitae configere possit.” in *Tabularum Ioannis Blanchini Canones*, ed. Augustinus Moravus (Venice: Simon Bevilacqua), 1495, a2r. (GW 4410) The dedication is dated to Padua, Jan. 1, 1495.

characters”¹⁵—while editing for the first time the astrological tables of this 15th century astrologer. “Had the invention of printing occasionally happened in those ancient times, we would not have lost the milky eloquence of Livy, the miraculous but still gracious brevity of Sallust, nor Curtius, or Trogus, nor Tacitus, Plautus—and among our astrologers Theogenes, Anthony Musa, Albucius, Rubrius,¹⁶ and some six hundred other authors. The committed love-heat of Gallus would still survive, and Catull would not only deplore his Lesbia (if those in Hell can feel any pain)—which we all see now either truncated or missing enough even to their authors.”¹⁷ Although with a humorous tone—treating the amorous heat of Catull’s text as if the ancient poet himself could feel it in the Underworld at the time of reading—Augustinus attributes to transmission the only possibility of saving knowledge from obliteration. As he continues, if the Egyptians had known printing, they would have immortalized and honored the inventor as a god, and he quotes an epigram by Hieronymus Bononius praising the divine discoverer of this art,¹⁸ in order to point out that books which only kings could afford earlier, can now be found even on the shelves of the poor. Almost anticipating the Eisensteinian narrative of the “printing revolution”, transmitting knowledge through easily accessible texts for Augustinus means the sine qua non of a fervent cultural life.

If the affordability of books nourishes culture, their loss entails the decay of civilization. In a few lines of the dedication to the *Tabula Alfonsina* (1492), which could be regarded even as a literary program, he clearly defines the areas where the loss of knowledge was hitting the hardest in the general decay of sciences: philosophy, oratory, poetics, and mathematics (the latter of which signifies astronomy and astrology in medieval terminology). “All remains of philosophy, oratory, poetics and mathematics were demolished, because the vile barbarity has abolished so much that we can still hardly breathe in our age

15 The last three names are taken from Pliny the Elder (Nat. Hist. 29, 5), where they appear as famous doctors of the Augustan age.

16 “Quod si eruditus illis priscorum temporibus obtigisset, non Livii lacteam facundiam, non Sallustii miram cum venustate brevitatem, non Curtium, non Trogum, Tacitum, Plautum, ex nostris quoque astrologis Theogenem, Anthonium Musam, Albucium, Rubrium aliosque sexcentos desideraremus. Viverent adhuc commissi calores Galli, non tantum Lesbiam suam (si quis apud inferos est sensus) indoleret Catullus, quae tamen modo vel manca conspicimus omnia, vel suis et ipsa satis intercepta.” Ibid., a2r.

17 “Quantum reipublicae litterariae profuerit recens imprimendorum characterum inventum, Andrea Stibori, amice beneficentissime, etiam si aliorum testimonia desint, unicus nobis Ioannes Blanchinus testimonio evidentissimo existit.” in *Tabularum Joannis Blanchini canones*, ed. Augustinus Moravus (Venice: Simon Bevilacqua), 1495, A2r.

18 Inc. “Tingere dispositis chartas quicunque metallis // cepit...”. The epigram appeared first in the *De orthographia dictionum* of Johannes Tortellius (Treviso: Hermannus Liechtenstein, 1477; GW M47213) and it was later reprinted in other incunables.

from that deluge, which was by far the worst ever.”¹⁹ The ideological stance against the medieval past that Augustinus exhibits here was not only his own. In fact, his exhortation follows the suit of the ideas exposed by Marcantonio Sabellico, a prominent professor of the public school of San Marco in Venice, in his dialogue *De reparatione linguae Latinae* (1490, published in 1494), where the interlocutor Iularius explains the same subject with very similar words:²⁰

Non Philosophia, non Oratoria, non Poetica, non Mathematica usquam supererat, quoniam *fedā barbaries ita summerserit omnia, ut a clade illa longe calamitosissima egre nobis ad id usque aevi respirare sit datum.* (Augustinus Moravus, *ibid.*)

Quae, et si non sunt talia, ut iacturam illam, quam nostrae litterae gothica tempestate fecere, omnino resarciant, levant tamen inopiam et egestatem, quam dira illa calamitas latino nomini attulit. Quod malum ita violenter omnia invaserat, *ut a clade illa longe vetustissima aegre ad hos annos respirare sit datum.* Aliquid igitur effecerunt nostrorum temporum viri, per quos si non rem ipsam, umbram tamen et verum Latinitatis adhuc nomen retinemus, si quidem horum ductu et auspiciis Romanus sermo omnem exuit squalorem, *omnem barbariem, quibus sordibus diu fuerat immersus.* (Marcantonio Sabellico, *De reparatione linguae Latinae*)

These citations taken from Sabellico let us position Augustinus within the Venetian-Paduan humanistic intellectual trends of the 1490s. Sabellico’s dialogue written on the *Reparation of the Latin language* might have inspired Augustinus on two different levels: first, as a dialogue situated within a contemporary scenery, it could be used as a generic model for his own *In defensionem poetices*. Second, the main agenda of Sabellico’s text, the revival of

19 “Non Philosophia, non Oratoria, non Poetica, non Mathematica usquam supererat, quoniam fedā barbaries ita summerserit omnia, ut a clade illa longe calamitosissima egre nobis ad id usque aevi respirare sit datum.” Augustinus Moravus, “Exhortatoria in impressionem tabularum Astronomicarum Alfonsi Regis,” in King Alphonse, *Tabulae astronomicae*, ed. Johannes Lucilius Santritter (Venice: Johannes Hamman, 1492), f. a2r.

20 Marcantonio Sabellico, *De reparatione linguae Latinae*, ed. Guglielmo Bottari (Messina: Centro interdipartimentale di studi umanistici, 1999), 86–87. See also Patrick Baker, “A Labyrinth of Praise and Blame: On the Form and Structure of Marcantonio Sabellico’s ‘De latinae linguae reparatione,’” in *Historiographie des Humanismus. Literarische Verfahren, soziale Praxis, geschichtliche Räume*, ed. Johannes Helmrath, Albert Schirrmeister, Stefan Schlelein (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2013), 209–240. At the same time, this citation proves that Augustinus had access to Sabellico’s text already before its publication around 1494, as his exhortatory letter is dated to June 16, 1492 (XVI. Kal. Julii). Interestingly, Augustinus’s letter was in turn plagiarized in a letter written by Hunoldus, a German Carthusian of Roermond to Johannes Murmellius in 1500 (see Karl Krafft, Wilhelm Creelius, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Humanismus am Niederrhein und in Westfalen*, 2. Teil, Elberfeld, 1875, 32, the first ten lines of his letter are taken verbatim from Augustinus).

ancient literary culture through interpreting and commenting Greek and Latin texts, can be paralleled to Augustinus's agenda of reinstating—and if possible—surpassing ancient scholarship through the correct understanding of classical texts, and through such revolutionary discoveries, as the printing press.

Philosophy, oratory, poetics, and mathematics (i.e. astrology), the four subjects mentioned in the exhortatory letter of the *Tabulae Alfonsinae*, united those topics as well that are covered in the *In defensionem poetices*. The setting of the dialogue explicitly follows a philosophical pattern, and the Platonic dialogues of *Gorgias*, *Phaedrus* and *Timaeus* are commemorated by name. No doubt, Augustinus read the dialogues of Plato in the translation of Ficino, first published in 1484, and used them both as a generic and a thematic model. On the other hand, Augustinus stresses the value of humor as well: the dialogue should indulge in the license of “adages, witty sayings, jokes, just as with some more delightful rhetoric flowers.”²¹ In this spirit, the dialogue starts off with a joke: as Laelius finds Augustinus, he remarks that his friend has almost evicted the Helicon, because the Muses are always in his company. The alter ego of Augustinus in the dialogue is not completely happy with this ludicrous approach to poetry, as he immediately challenges Laelius for a debate, so that he could defend the value of poetry. Therefore, they look for a real Platonic grove near the Brenta River with a plane tree, explicitly imitating the beginning of the *Phaedrus*. A third, farcical figure, Bassareus joins them on the road there already inebriated not by poetry, but by wine. The choice of the church of Mary Magdalene as the background to the debate might be more than haphazard: as Laelius wanted to liberate his friend from poetry, whom he considered as a morally corrupt citharist (*Psaltria*),²² and Mary Magdalene, the patron saint of the church might function as a symbol of conversion and finding moral values even in the lascivious writings of the ancients.²³ Instead of poetry, Augustinus is advised to study medicine, famously invented also by Apollo, the god of poetry and Aesculapius. Augustinus, incensed by his friend's proposal, starts a twofold defense of poetry: first he annihilates the value of medicine, especially that of traditional, “non-astrologic” medicine, and reveals the truth hidden under the superficial meaning of poetry.

What Augustinus, the author makes his literary alter ego say against medicine, is in many aspects already a literary tradition in his time. He turns

21 “adagiis diceriis et iocis non secus ac floribus quibusdam amenioribus lasciuiet”. Augustinus Moravus, *Dialogus*, 2r.

22 “Enitar enim Psaltrias has animo tuo si non excutere omnino, at magis magisque indies exosas efficere.” Augustinus Moravus, *Dialogus*, 4v.

23 Augustinus Moravus, *Dialogus*, 3v. At the same time, a church of Mary Magdalene (used by Benedictine nuns) existed really south of the city centre in Padua until 1509, when it was demolished by the troops of Emperor Maximilian I. See Svoboda, *Il dialogo...*, 39–40 and *Padova: Basiliche e chiese*, ed. Claudio Bellinati, Lionello Puppi (Vicenza: Neri Pozza, 1975), vol. 1., 36.

to anti-medical commonplaces of humanism, when he cites Seneca that the doctors are experimenting at our expense, or he quotes the famous epitaph that the sick person perished because of the great number of doctors (“turba se medicorum interiisse” – originally attributed to Hadrian, the emperor: “turba medicorum perii”), or he reproaches the doctors that they practise the only profession where it is legally allowed to kill.²⁴ In fact, Augustinus must have compiled these passages either from a letter of Petrarch’s *Familiares* (V, 19) addressed to Pope Clement VI, where all these arguments occur, or from their enlarged form in the *Invectivae contra medicos*. Nevertheless, he adds an important new point: a common shortcoming among the doctors of the present is that they are not familiar enough with astrology, although many ancient doctors, including Apollodorus, Albumasar and Galenus suggested that they should be. According to Augustinus, medicine is nothing but divination, and consequently, doctors must study astrology. As he says, “the task of the doctor is to tell what sickness the patient has had, has and will have, and this is already a kind of divination.”²⁵ Although the connection between medicine and astrology is already present in Macrobius’s *Saturnalia*, this idea takes on a much greater significance when Augustinus actually identifies the two disciplines (“quod est divinationis proprie”).²⁶ He continues to add further arguments in favor of astrological medicine by quoting Celsus about the teaching of critical days. At the same time, he repeatedly criticizes the “empirici medici”, the empirical doctors who exercise practical medicine, healing with herbs and potions.

At this point, the dialogue is divided by an interlude, where Bassareus plays the clown, and Augustinus inserts a humorous debate between this drunken friend, who just arrived from Bologna, and the two serious students. This short interplay comfortably divides the dialogue into two major sections, the one dealing with the futility of medicine, and the other handling the wisdom of poetry. It is here that Augustinus exposes his main agenda, the divinatory relevance of poetry: “Should we return to our subject and try our hands at poetry, which you ridicule so much? Because my main intention is that you should come to terms with my Muses, and *you should consider those people who are inspired by this divine gift (munus) not less than some kind of*

24 Augustinus Moravus, *Dialogus*, 6v. See in general Svoboda, *Il dialogo...*

25 “Nam medicus vel commoda vel incommoda in corpore praenoscit, sicut ait Hippocrates. Oportet medicum dicere de aegroto: [Greek print missing], id est quae sint, quae fuerint, quaeque mox futura sequentur. Quod divinationis est proprie. Et alibi: qui vero – inquit – ea quae de re altissima tractavimus rata tenent, norint astrologiam medicinae non minimam esse partem.” Augustinus Moravus, *Dialogus*, 5v. The passage is derived from Macrobius, *Sat.* 1, 20, 5. Augustinus considered this idea of such crucial importance that he even wanted to print a Greek quotation from Hippocrates to prove his point – but the printer unfortunately could not fulfill the task.

26 Macrobius says only that divination (and not astrology!) and medicine are related, but not identical: “consociatae sunt disciplinae.”

oracles.”²⁷ Instigated by the gods, the poets are nothing but tools in the hands of the immortals: “we offer ourselves to the immortal gods in no other ways than as some tools.”²⁸ In fact, *oracle*—*oraculum* seems to be the connecting notion between the art of medicine and the art of poetry. Just as medicine was—or at least should be—according to Hippocratic standards an act of divination, poetry is the revelation of an oracle, and the connecting discipline between the two is astrology. The divine inspiration of the poet, which is perhaps the most common and widespread apologetic argument in favor of poetry in the Renaissance from Boccaccio onwards to Conrad Celtis and Joachim Vadian, becomes a tool of reconciliation here. Divine inspiration and medical divination can reconcile, as it will be represented at the end of the work by the common chanting of the two friends.²⁹ Furthermore, astrology provides a link between the two, as the knowledge which may be gathered from the poetic integuments of the ancients relates to the ancient gods—who are planets and stars at the same time.

In the following, Augustinus offers a definition of poetry, which clearly indicates the cultural context in which it was proposed: “poetry is a metric structure of fictitious and true narration, composed with a fitting rhythm or meter, for the sake of utility and pleasure.”³⁰ This statement follows verbatim the definition of poetry given by Diomedes grammaticus, who devoted the third book of his *Ars grammatica* to the poetic genres and the study of metric.³¹ Diomedes seems to have been popular as a source of literary scholarship in the Veneto region, as Franciscus Niger, a Venetian-Padovan intellectual in the 1480s and 90s used the same source for defining the poetic genres in his *Grammatica*, published in 1480 in Venice.³² It is important to note that the same definition is given for poetry by Joachim Vadianus in his *De poetica et carminis ratione* a few years later (1517), which shows the lasting influence of such

27 “Quin ergo ad institutum potius nostrum revertimur et vel irrisam abs te tantopere poetice iam tandem etiam adorimur? Volo siquidem ante omnia cum Musis meis in gratiam redeas, atque id genus hominum qui praeclaro hoc munere afflantur non secus ac oracula quaedam suspicias.” Augustinus Moravus, *Dialogus*, 6v.

28 “Quid enim mirabilis [...] ita divino quodam furore corripi, ut dum calore isto inflammanti vires proprias egredimur, nil aliud quam organa quaedam nos diis immortalibus praestemus?”

29 Cf. Augustinus Moravus, *Dialogus*, 14r. “Salvete o nimium celebres Aganappidos umbrae...”

30 “Poetica est fictae vereque narrationis congruenti Rithmo vel pede composita metrica structura ad utilitatem voluptatemque composita.” Augustinus Moravus, *Dialogus*, 8r.

31 *Grammatici Latini*, ed. Heinrich Keil, (Leipzig: Teubner, 1857), vol. 1., 473.

32 See by this author, “Franciscus Pescennius Niger Báthory Miklós váci püspök udvarában,” *Magyar Könyvszemle* 127 (2013), 273, note 40. As mentioned above, Johannes Lucilius Santritter, the printer of Augustinus, and the addressee of one of his letters, set up his printing press first in the house of Franciscus Niger and he immortalized their friendship in a poem published in Niger’s *Grammatica* (cf. his poem “omnibus studiosis adolescentibus,” Franciscus Niger, *Grammatica* (Venice: Santritter, 1480), f. dd5r–dd6r; GW M27086).

technical treatises on poetry in Central Europe.³³ The popularity of Diomedes's definition of poetry in the Viennese, and in the wider East Central European setting demonstrates the continuity and perhaps even the influence of the ideas exposed by Augustinus.

The poets' divine inspiration logically leads to the idea that their works contain hidden allegorical truth (*integumenta*) under the literal surface. First, Augustinus expounds the differentiation of Macrobius between the voluptuous tales (as the comedies of Menander, or the novels of Apuleius and Petronius), and virtuous tales (as those of Aesopus, or the "narrationes fabulosae", including the poems of Hesiod, Orpheus and the Pythagoreans).³⁴ Then, just as many other contemporary critics do, he goes into detail and describes the allegoric truth behind many famous and often cited mythological stories, mostly based on the *Mythologies* of Fulgence and the *Saturnalia* of Macrobius. The popularity of such allegorical interpretations is demonstrated by the famous manuscript called *Apologia poetarum*, compiled by Pangratz Bernhaupt (called Schwenter) and finished in 1505.³⁵ In this exquisite codex, all the illustrations designed for the *Dialogus in defensionem poetices* of Augustinus concern these allegorical scenes from the second part of the dialogue, except for the title page, where the author is depicted, following the typical pattern of early prints (fig. 1.). While all ten illustrations to the text itself deal with the allegorical interpretations of Gods, paradoxically, the pictures offer an almost verbatim pictorial transcription of the literary text in spite of the allegoric content. To quote just a few examples: Saturn (interpreted as Kronos/time) was the son of Caelum (sky), which means that at the time of Chaos there was no time, as we measure time from the skies. Similarly, Jupiter chasing away Saturn is a lesson for us all that new times change earlier times,

33 Vadian, *De poetica et carminis ratione*, cap. 1. (Vienna: Singrenius, 1517), f. b1v and Joachim Vadianus, *De poetica*, Bd. 1., *Kritische Ausgabe*, ed. Peter Schäffer (Munich: Fink, 1973), 13. See also Jörg Robert, *Konrad Celtis und das Projekt der deutschen Dichtung* (Tübingen, Niemeyer, 2003), 68. Robert connects Diomedes's and Vadian's definition to Celtis's concept of poetry. If this is correct, an obvious source of inspiration might have been Augustinus's dialogue, given the close relationship between Celtis and Augustinus. A further connecting point is that Vadinus wrote dedicatory poems to two works of Augustinus, the *Catalogus episcoporum Olomucensium* (1511) and the *Antilogion Guarini et Poggii* (1512). See Antonín Truhlář, *Rukověť k písemnictví humanistickému, zvláště básnickému v Čechách a na Moravě ve století XVI.*, (Prague: Česka akademie věd a umění, 1908), vol. 1., 72–74.

34 About Macrobius's definition of tales and its influence in 12th century commentary literature, see the classic work of Peter Dronke: *Fabula. Explorations into the Uses of Myth in Medieval Platonism* (Leiden: Brill, 1977), 15–32.

35 Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, lat. fol. 335. The text of Augustinus's dialogue occupies the ff. 7r–34r, and it is preceded by the *Apologia poetices* of Heinrich Bebel (published in 1501) and a short excerpt "in osiores poetries" from the *Genealogie* of Boccaccio (attributed to Boethius). See the facsimile edition in *Apologia poetarum. Die Schwenter-Handschrift Ms. lat. fol. 335. der Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz zu Berlin mit den Illustrationen Peter Vischers des Jüngeren*, introd. ed. Franz Josef Worstbrock, Fedja Anzelewsky, 2 vols. (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1987).

while Saturn's castration and the birth of Venus proves that everything is born out of the sky (fig. 2.). The tale of Tiresias, who was turned into a woman, when he saw two snakes coupling and struck them with his staff, and changed back to man when he saw them again and struck them, is retold word by word by Augustinus from Fulgentius (*Mit.* 2, 5), together with its allegorical interpretation, according to which Tiresias is an allegory of the four seasons. Striking the snakes symbolizes spring, woman is summer, his changing to man is autumn, while his blindness is winter (fig. 3.).³⁶

By returning to the allegorical truth hidden in it the justification of poetry was not an original motif even on the Central European literary scene. After the last two books of the *Genealogie deorum gentilium* of Boccaccio, a number of works—including those of Coluccio Salutati and Francesco da Fiano³⁷—argued in the same manner, and some of them seem to have been in circulation in the courts of East Central Europe. Here, as in many other respects, Enea Silvio Piccolomini might have played the role of mediator. As a reaction to Enea Silvio's works, Zbigniew Oleśnicki (1389–1455), the learned Polish cardinal of Cracow, summarized in 1453 all the positive knowledge he had about poets: first, the poets' intention is to direct their readers' attention towards truth: true knowledge might be moral philosophy, of physics, or simply to let the readers think about the rightness of some fictional characters and the depravity of others. As he himself reveals, he based his definition of the poet on what he picked up from the *Etymologies* of Isidor of Seville, suggesting that all fictional tales possess a marrow (medulla), an internal, hidden meaning.³⁸ Later, Aelius

36 Augustinus Moravus, *Dialogus*, 8v, 10v. About the iconography of the illustrations of Peter Vischer the Younger, see Fedja Anzelewsky, "Die Illustrationen des Berliner Ms. lat. fol. 335.," vol. 1., 38–39, 42.

37 See Colucii Salutatis *de laboribus Herculis*, ed. B. L. Ullmann, 2 vols. (Torino: In aedibus Thesauri Mundi, 1951) and Maria Luisa Plaisant, "Un opuscolo inedito di Francesco da Fiano in difesa della poesia," *Rinascimento* 1 (1961), 119–211 (with corrections from Antonio Stäuble, "Francesco da Fiano in difesa della poesia," *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 26 (1964) 256–259). See also Bodo Guthmüller, "Zur religiösen Polemik gegen das Studium der antiken Dichter um 1400," in *Wechselseitige Wahrnehmung der Religionen im Spätmittelalter und in der Renaissance*, ed. Ludger Grenzmann, Thomas Haye et al. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2012), 93–116.

38 "Graves et egregias plerumque admiscueris sentencias in tantum quidem, ut officium poete, quo te per singulas titulasti epistolas, apprime videaris prosecutus esse. Poetarum enim, quos omnium magnarum rerum atque artium scientia nunquam latuit, intencionem in id precipue vergere comperimus, si saltem ipsorum veri estimatores sumus, ut si quid in opusculis suis fabulosum inserant, vel ad moralem philosophiam, que virtutibus hominum vitam instituit, vel ad phisicam, que nature secreta rimatur, pertinere innotescant, vel ut splendidissimis laudibus virtutum, quas per exempla clarissimorum virorum deducunt, aut viciorum dignis reprehensionibus, que per obscenorum hominum perditos mores cogitationi nostre detestanda subjiciunt, legentium animos et oculos dulcedine delectationis alliciant. Fabule, si quidem unde dicte sint, et quis primus inventor ipsarum extiterit, queve cause illas fingendi priscos poetas impulerint, memini, me Isidorum in suis ethimologiis narrantem legisse [Isid. *Etym.* I, 40]: *fabulas – inquit – poete a fando nominaverunt, quia non sunt res facte, sed dum taxat loquendo fecte, que ideo sunt inducte, ut mutorum animalium inter se colloquio imago quedam vite hominum nosceretur.* Atque ideo non sunt poetice intelligende fabule prout cortex

Cervinus Lampridius (or Ilija Crijević), a Ragusa-born humanist in papal service tried to promote his career at the court of Vladislav II by writing an oration praising the poets (*de laudibus poetarum*).³⁹ Even Erasmus accepted in one of his earliest published works, the *Enchiridion militis Christiani*, that “maybe you may read with a little more profit the poetic works with allegory than the story of the holy books, if you stop at the surface.”⁴⁰ Interestingly, in the story of Phaëton, on one of the few occasions where Augustinus Moravus does not follow the interpretation given by Fulgentius he allegorizes the story similarly to Erasmus: the son of the Sun with his chariot fallen to the Earth is a warning against those leaders, who act temerarily.⁴¹ Erasmus interprets the story exactly in the same manner at the beginning of the *Institutio principis Christiani*.⁴² Conradus Mutianus Rufus (1470–1526), canon of Gotha, and a central figure of early 16th century German humanism, in 1505 went as far as to say that “there is but one god and one goddess, but many are their powers and names. Jupiter, Sol, Apollo, Moses, Christ, Luna, Ceres, Proserpine, Earth, Mary. But do not pronounce this. Because these are hidden by silence as the Eleusian mysteries.”⁴³

sonat exterior, quarum si latentum medullam acumine alcioris ingenii voluerimus perscrutari, inuenimus poetarum scripturas modo naturalium rerum, modo laudabilium morum, modo egregiarum narratione historiarum ad nostre institutionem vite luculenti dogmate esse inventas.” *Der Briefwechsel des Eneas Silvius Piccolomini*, ed. Rudolf Wolkan. Vol. 3/1, (Vienna: Holder, 1918), 247–8. (Dated Sept. 10, 1453). It went unnoticed so far that Cardinal Oleśnicki seems to have cited Francesco da Fiano in his letter. Cf. Plaisant, “Un opuscolo inedito di Francesco da Fiano...” 130: “Non sunt igitur, pater optime, poetice intelligende fabule prout cortex sonat exterior, quarum si latentem medullam acumine alti velis ingenii perscrutari[s], inuenies poetarum scripturas modo naturalium rerum, modo laudabilium morum, per quos virtuose vite candores acquirimus, modo egregiarum historiarum, quarum exemplis obscena horrere vite et virtutum pulchretudine delectari debere nobis ostenditur.”

39 Aelius Lampridius Cervinus, *Oratio ad regem Ladislaum de laudibus poetarum*, Vat. lat. 1678. and Vat. Lat. 2939, 160v–166r. About Aelius Lampridius Cervinus, see Joseph Nicola Sola, “Aelii Lampridii Cervini Opera,” *Archivio storico per la Dalmazia*, 16–19 (1933–1935), fasc. 95, 97, 98, 100, 103, 109, Darko Novaković, “Autografi Ilije Crijevića (I): Vat. lat. 1678,” *Hrvatska književna baština*, 3 (2004), 9–251; Stanislaus Škunca, *Aelius Lampridius Cervinus poeta Ragusinus (saec. XV)* (Rome: Edizioni Francescane, 1971).

40 “Immo fortasse plusculo fructu legetur poetica cum allegoria, quam narratio sacrorum librorum, si consistas in cortice.” Erasmus Roterodamus, *Ausgewählte Werke*, ed. Annemarie and Hajo Holborn (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1933), 70. Jean Seznec, *The Survival of the Pagan Gods*, trans. Barbara F. Sessions (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 99.

41 Augustinus Moravus, *Dialogus*, 11v–12r: “Quid vero poetas Phetonta finxisse credideris, nisi imperitioribus regni et imperii habenas non temere committendas esse?”

42 “Ubi Phaetontis fabulam cum voluptate didicerit, admoneat hanc esse principis imaginem, qui dum aetatis calore praeceps, sed nulla adiutus sapientia rerum habenas capessit, qui viribus quidem polleat, careat autem sapientia.” Erasmus, “*Institutio Principis Christiani*,” ed. Otto Herding, in *Opera omnia Desiderii Erasmi*, ordo 4, vol. 1. (Amsterdam: North Holland Publishing, 1974), 142.

43 *Der Briefwechsel des Conradus Mutianus*, ed. Karl Gillert (Halle: Hendel, 1890), vol. 1., 22.: “Est unus deus et una dea. Sed sunt multa uti numina, ita et nomina: Juppiter, Sol, Apollo, Moses, Christus, Luna, Ceres, Proserpina, Tellus, Maria. Sed haec cave enunties. Sunt enim occulta

Martin Polich, an acquaintance of Bohuslaus Lobkowitz von Hassenstein, published a *Laconismos tumultuarius* in Leipzig in 1502, in which he defended the integrity, and partly, the superiority of poetry against theology, and claimed that poetry is a universal source of knowledge and science.⁴⁴ Despite these earlier and contemporary justifications of poetry, the *In defensionem poetices* of Augustinus might be considered the first elaborate effort to write a defense of poetry for an audience in the Eastern and Central European area.

The defense of poetry deals only with the interpretation of poetry and gives no advice whatsoever to the question of how poetic works should actually be composed, and whether modern poetry should also contain a hidden, allegorical message. Although our knowledge about the poetic output of Augustinus is relatively scarce,⁴⁵ on the basis of his surviving work we may guess that he had a penchant for allegorical descriptions in actual poetic works, too. The *Treni neglecte Religionis* (A mourning song of the neglected Religion), a hitherto unnoticed poem of Augustinus addressed to King Vladislav II, is attached to an oration held in Buda in 1500, in which the Venetian Sebastiano Giustiniani asked for help against the Turks from the king of Bohemia and Hungary.⁴⁶ The *Treni* depicts Religion as a Lady, using the rhetoric tools of prosopopoeia and personification, as she stands in front of the king in tattered dress and implores him for help against the Turks. Lady

silentio tamquam Eleusinarum dearum mysteria. Utendum est fabulis igitur atque enigmatum integumentis in re sacra [...] quum Jovem nomino, Christum intelligo et verum Deum." See also Fidel Rädle, "Mutianus Rufus, Conradus," in *Verfasserlexikon: Deutscher Humanismus 1480–1520* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2011), c. 377–400, here c. 391.

- 44 Susann El-Kholi, "Martin Polich von Mellerstadt," in *Verfasserlexikon: Deutscher Humanismus 1480–1520* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2012), Bd. 2., 513–514; Gustav Bauch, *Geschichte des Leipziger Frühhumanismus: Mit besonderer Rücksicht auf die Streitigkeiten zwischen Konrad Wimpina und Martin Mellerstadt* (Leipzig: Harrassowitz, 1899), 114–129. and Volhard Wels, *Der Begriff der Dichtung in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2009), 246–248. Wels suggests (p. 247, note 35) that one of Polich's sources was Bartolommeo della Fonte (Fontius).

- 45 See the study of Christian Gastgeber in this volume about the limited circulation of his poems.

- 46 Augustinus Doctor [=Augustinus Moravus], "Treni neglecte Religionis ad Vladislaum Pannonie Boemieque Regem Inuictissimum," in Sebastiano Giustiniani, *Oratio magnifici et clarissimi D. Sebastiani Iustiniani oratoris Veneti ad Serenissimum Dominum Vladislaum Pannonie et Bohemie regem* ([Leipzig]: [Stöckel], 1500), B2v–B3v. (ISTC ij00612700, GW M15600). I have used the digital edition of the Wolfenbüttel copy: <http://diglib.hab.de/inkunabeln/202-69-quod-1/start.htm>, accessed on 12.12.2014. Truhlář knew about this poem from a note of Michael Denis, but he could not find the text itself. Cf. Truhlář, *Rukověť...*, vol. 1., 74. Valentin Eck might have taken the theme of his own *Threni neglectae religionis* (Cracow: Haller, 1518) from Augustinus Moravus. On the historical background of the oration, a possible league of Hungary with France and Venice against the Turks, see Balogh István, *Velencei diplomaták Magyarországon. 1500–1526.*, [Venetian diplomats in Hungary 1500–1526] (Szeged: s.t., 1929), 11–26. and Giuseppe Gullano, "Sebastiano Giustiniani," in *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 57 (2001), 290–296. Augustinus's poem hints at this league ("Cernis ut invicto procedat robore Gallus, // Hunc contra socia et iungere signa parat // Adriaco Veneti mittunt et ab aequore patres..."), *Oratio*, b3r), which was the purpose of Giustiniani's mission.

Religion uses mythological deities to describe the characteristics of king: his mental skills were given to him by Pallas, the strong arms come from Bellona, his eloquence from Mercury (Cinthius), his peacefulness from Jupiter and his weapons from Mars (lines 5–8). The use of the allegorical narrative both on the level of narrative (Religio as a prosopopoeia) and as rhetoric adornments (Pallas, Bellona, Jupiter, Mars) shows that allegory was not only a historical phenomenon, but it could be used in contemporary poetry, as well.

In sum, I have tried to demonstrate that Augustinus does more than simply copy the arguments of the most important Renaissance apologetics of poetry, Boccaccio and Petrarch, adding evidence from ancient allegorical literary interpretation, from Macrobius and Fulgentius. Recently, Franz Josef Worstbrock has pointed out that despite its merits, namely closely imitating the structure and the style of Platonic dialogues and its literary value, it adds nothing original to the poetic theories of the Renaissance, as it concentrates only on the allegorical interpretation of the myths as the only method to safeguard the moral and philosophical integrity of poets and poetry.⁴⁷ In fact, we may better understand his efforts, if we consider them as modernization of the widespread and often repeated contentions in the defense of poetry. It is obvious from his dedicatory letters and the *Defense* that despite his young age—26 at the time of the publication—Augustinus tried to present himself to his audience at home as a man with a mission: as someone who is convinced of the righteousness of his humanistic ideals and of the superiority of the knowledge of his age compared to the dark ages that preceded his own century. In his *In defensionem poetices*, the detailed comparison of poetry with medicine serves not only to demonstrate the inferiority of the medical use of language, as compared to the purity of Latin poetry—an argument that has been well exposed already in the *Invectivae contra medicos* of Petrarch. Augustinus Moravus—unlike the Italian master humanist—points also to the common root of poetry and medicine, their oracle-like character and their cosmic-astrological correspondence. Drawing on a large number of late antique and Renaissance sources (Macrobius, Fulgentius and Petrarch among others), Augustinus has created a synthetic defense of poetry, in which the traditional lines of controversy, according to which poetry is exempt of the pursuit of material interests and it contains a hidden, allegorical meaning, are melted with astrological and moralizing arguments. It might have been exactly its synthetic character which made this dialogue popular among contemporary humanists and worthy of an iconographic program in the *Apologia poetarum*. Throughout, this synthetic approach to the defense of poetry is related to the idea of the survival and transmission of ancient wisdom, which is so palpably present in the dedications of Augustinus to his other works.

47 *Apologia poetarum*, ed. Worstbrock, 20–21.